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FINAL RECORD OF THE SIX HUNDRED AND FORTY-EIGHTH PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Thursday, 25 March 1993, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. Gerald Shannon (Canada)

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The PRESIDENT: I declare open the 648th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

At the outset, I wish to inform you that I shall convene an informal open-ended consultation of the Conference, immediately after we conclude the list of speakers, to consider the proposal advanced by the representative of the United States of America, Ambassador Ledogar, at the 645th plenary meeting of the Conference. That proposal was reviewed yesterday, at the Presidential consultation, and I felt that it would be appropriate to have a wider exchange of views on it, in order to review the text circulated at the meeting held on Monday by the Ad Hoc Committee on Transparency in Armaments. As this matter has already been brought to the attention of non-members who participate in the work of the Ad Hoc Committee, it is understood that the informal consultation is also open to non-members.

I have on my list of speakers today the representatives of Mexico, Switzerland, Greece and Cuba, as well as the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts to Consider International Cooperative Measures to Detect and Identify Seismic Events, who will introduce the progress report of the Ad Hoc Group, which has been circulated as document CD/1185. I now give the floor to the representative of Mexico, Ambassador Marín Bosch.

Mr. MARIN BOSCH (Mexico) (translated from Spanish): We are pleased to see an eminent and active Canadian diplomat presiding over this Conference. We wish you success in your task and offer you the delegation of Mexico's full cooperation.

Allow me before I begin my statement, to refer to the suggestion you have just made to us. The proposal that there should be a joint statement from the Conference on Disarmament about the Register of Conventional Arms in New York is highly interesting and as all the delegates who attended the meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee on Transparency in Armaments this week will know, I repeat, as they will know, unfortunately many delegations, I emphasize, many delegations, are not in a position to agree to such a joint statement at this stage of our work. I hope that you will take this situation into account if - as I hope you will not - you convene us in informal session at the end of this meeting.

The year 1993 began very well for disarmament. In January the Convention on the elimination of chemical weapons was signed and the United States and the Russian Federation also signed the START Two agreement. We nurture the hope that 1993 will also end well. Substantive progress is expected in various spheres, including the four that we have decided to focus on in our annual meeting: the complete prohibition of nuclear testing, negative assurances, outer space and transparency in armaments. It is true that the Ad Hoc Committee on the first of these subjects still has no negotiating mandate and that many countries consider the task that has been assigned to it for the coming months to be modest in the utmost. However, we feel that in this sphere there could be changes very shortly

in the positions of some nuclear-weapon States. We are therefore awaiting an announcement that could
have very important consequences for nuclear disarmament. We consider that the time is ripe to achieve a CTBT and we have the hope that the political leaders will make use of the opportunity.

Apart from the four topics to which we have agreed to give formal treatment, we shall continue informal consultations on non-proliferation in all its aspects. We feel that the meetings held recently on this subject have given us a glimpse of greater readiness for more detailed consideration. Since the beginning of the year there has also been progress in the First Committee of the General Assembly. In particular the view was unanimously expressed that it is necessary to strengthen the United Nations Secretariat so that it is in a position to discharge fully the tasks which the Member States of the Organization have assigned to it. In a few weeks time the Disarmament Commission will hold its annual meeting and there too we hope that further progress will be possible along the path outlined in the reforms agreed upon a few years back. But perhaps even more important is the first meeting of the preparatory committee for the 1995 conference to review and extend the non-Proliferation Treaty. We are persuaded that there is a need to take up the substantive aspects of the conference as of now, and it seems to us that it is incumbent upon all States parties to give serious thought to the future of the nuclear non-proliferation regime established under that instrument. There can be no doubt that the success of the 1995 conference will depend on the outlook on substantive issues to be adopted by the States parties to the NPT, and most particularly the nuclear-weapon States.

In this first part of our annual meeting, we have heard a good number of statements partially or entirely given over to the question of transparency in armaments. The delegation of Mexico would like to offer a few remarks on this topic, which, as we all know, is provisionally on our agenda. In accordance with resolution 46/36 L of 1991, the General Assembly requested the Conference on Disarmament to address the question of the interrelated aspects of the excessive and destabilizing accumulation of arms, including military holdings and procurement through national production, and to elaborate universal and non-discriminatory practical means to increase openness and transparency in this field. The General Assembly also requested the Conference to address the problems of, and also the elaboration of practical means to increase, openness and transparency related to the transfer of high technology with military applications and to weapons of mass destruction, in accordance with existing legal instruments. The foregoing is part of a much broader endeavour that the General Assembly decided to carry out over time and following various avenues. Ours is just one of them.

Last year, under the direction of Ambassador Wagenmakers of the Netherlands, saw a first stage consisting of the elaboration of the technical procedures necessary for the effective operation of the Register of Conventional Arms, set up at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, together with the modalities for early expansion of the scope of the Register by the addition of further

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categories of equipment and inclusion of data on military holdings and procurement through national production. The General Assembly called upon Member States to make available information on imports and exports of armaments annually, as of this year, in accordance with the procedures mentioned above. By the middle of next year the Member States of the United Nations will also have to communicate their views on the operation of the Register and the addition of further categories of equipment and the elaboration of the Register to include military holdings and procurement through national production. In that year - next year - the Secretary-General will have to draw up a report on these topics to be considered during the forty-ninth General Assembly. Among other things, the Secretary-General's report will have to take into consideration the results of the review of these issues which, in turn, will be put forward by the CD. Hence the provisional inclusion of this topic on the Conference's agenda.

What is the purpose of all these efforts within the United Nations system with regard to what is known as transparency in armaments? Resolution 46/36 L gives us a few elements to respond to that question. We read that "excessive and destabilizing arms build-ups pose a threat to national, regional and international peace and security". and in the second operative paragraph the General Assembly "declares its determination" to prevent this "excessive and destabilizing" accumulation "of arms, including conventional arms". It is obvious that, in the lengthy negotiations on the text of the resolution in question, it was not possible to reach agreement on which weapons would be covered by the Register beyond conventional weapons. An agreement for the inclusion in the Register of weapons of mass destruction, among other things, was simply overlooked. This is the origin of part of the task entrusted to us by the General Assembly.

When the General Assembly talks about the "excessive and destabilizing accumulation of arms", my delegation considers that reference is being made to all arms. We would put nuclear weapons in place first. It may be thought that the production of a few atomic bombs in 1945 in what was until then a nuclear-free world was not only "excessive" but also "destabilizing", since it gave rise to unbridled competition in this sphere. The growing militarization of outer space could also be described as an "excessive" and doubtless "destabilizing" activity. And who is to decide that a given country or region is accumulating an excessive quantity of armaments? Could it be the main producers and exporters of arms who will take that decision? How can we justify a situation where, in their desire to find and/or keep their arms markets, some Governments, even at the highest level, agree to act as sales agents?

Many countries, including certainly some of the advocates of the issue of transparency in armaments and enthusiastic supporters of the Register, should feel very uncomfortable. On the one hand, they appear resolute in wanting to curb this "excessive accumulation" of conventional weapons, and on the other they insist on placing their own arms in any market open to them. In this room we have been told that the uncontrolled proliferation of conventional armaments is exacerbating many regional and local conflicts and causing instability on a scale

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not seen for many years. We have also been told that the Council of Europe has already expressed alarm at the accumulation of conventional weapons in certain regions and that the member States of the European Community have supported the United Nations Register. The key words seem to be "uncontrolled proliferation", "conventional weapons" and "certain regions". All of this without a doubt will give rise to discussion which we can already say will be lively in the Ad Hoc Committee chaired by the distinguished Ambassador of Egypt.

Another aspect of the question is that of the transfer of high technology with military applications and weapons of mass destruction, which has been taken up recently by the distinguished representatives of Argentina and Brazil. For too many years some scientifically advanced countries have unsuccessfully sought to monopolize scientific knowledge and its technological applications. It has been a chimerical exercise, the results of which are obvious: the proliferation of knowledge, even in such fields as the nuclear sphere, and the multitude of proof that ideas do not respect frontiers and that any technology, however sensitive, has a price that some, though not all, can pay and are ready to pay. My Government is persuaded that, despite some doubts about the Register as it now stands, the topic of transparency in armaments deserves careful analysis to serve as a basis to strengthen the role of the United Nations in this sphere. The Register is a very modest step in that direction, but we nurture the hope that the members of the CD can reach agreement to ensure success and its early expansion. Certainly we will not achieve this if, as we have heard here, our focus is based on what has been described as "pragmatic principles". Almost all of us are in favour of pragmatism and many of us have principles, but we do not believe that our pragmatism could lead us to defend "pragmatic principles".

In concluding I should like to offer a few thoughts that we shared a few days ago with the members of the Trade and Development Board when considering the subject of the possible establishment within UNCTAD of an ad hoc working group to explore the issue of structural adjustment for the transition to disarmament. After four decades of an unbridled arms race, the international community is moving towards détente and a reversal of that trend. How to demilitarize the economy - at the worldwide and national level - is one of the biggest challenges we face today. For years, some of us have been emphasizing the imperative need to put an end to the arms race, underlining the close relationship between disarmament and development, proposing and supporting practical measures. For example, we advocated a reduction in the military budgets of all countries, particularly the main military Powers. We have also examined on many occasions the economic benefits that could flow from general demilitarization. Now that a new era seems to be dawning in international relations, many countries, including almost all those that took part most enthusiastically in the arms race, are falling over themselves to reduce the economic burden of the arms build-up. Chemical weapons have been abolished, the nuclear arsenals of the two main military Powers are going to be reduced, nuclear tests have been temporarily suspended in three nations, the Register already mentioned has been established within the United Nations, as I have already said, the nuclear-weapon-free zones are being consolidated, some military bases are being closed, military budgets

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are being reduced, and a new atmosphere is already being felt in the multilateral disarmament forums.

Despite these encouraging signs, many countries are discovering that disarmament will not be easy or cheap.

The destruction of chemical arsenals calls for a major investment if they are to be destroyed without affecting the environment. Something similar is happening with the measures necessary to stockpile the enormous quantities of nuclear material, including plutonium, that were accumulated over several decades. What is more, in countries such as those of the former Warsaw Pact, the prevailing situation encompasses a tragic paradox: in their transition towards a market economy, there is an ever-increasing need for a massive injection of financial resources - resources that are slow in arriving because of the sad state of their economic structures - to develop, among other things, their exporting sectors so as to earn foreign currency. But one of the few forms of high technology that those countries possess - particularly the Russian Federation and Slovakia - is precisely military technology. Hence in their transition towards a market economy they have to maintain their military industries and seek new markets for their armaments. This will surely not be to anybody's benefit in the long-term: those who export weapons will not be able to break the circle of militarization of their economies; those who import them will continue to squander their money. Fortunately this does not affect Mexico, whose military expenditure is among the lowest in the world. But for years we have been taking an interest in the size of military expenditure internationally because this affects the development of the world economy, the state of which has a direct impact on almost all countries, including the economically less advanced ones. Hence our interest in the issue of structural adjustment for the transition to disarmament.

To close, the question of the conversion of military capacity to civilian uses is highly complicated and a start must be made on studying it in a multidisciplinary manner, ranging from the merely arithmetical aspects of the military and industrial sections of national budgets to the concepts of national and international security, via the military doctrines of various countries and the perceptions each has of its own security. And here emphasis must be placed on transparency with regard to military arsenals and the transfer of armaments. The development and expansion of the Register established by the United Nations on these topics will be a fundamental element in this regard.

The PRESIDENT: I thank Ambassador Marín Bosch for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to the Chair, and I can assure him that I heard his comments. It is my decision to convene open-ended informal consultations near the conclusion of the plenary, and I assume he will take advantage of that informal session to further advance his views. I now give the floor to the representative of Switzerland, Ambassador von Arx.

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Mr. von ARX (Switzerland) (translated from French): Since my delegation is taking the floor for the first time with you in the Chair, Sir, allow me at the outset to extend my congratulations to you on your election to this lofty responsibility. In the few meetings under your guidance, you have already convinced us by your experience and your efficiency.

Arms control and disarmament may be considered as one of the most successful areas of achievement of the post-cold-war period. Many bilateral agreements, regional or international, have been concluded and measures have been taken, which beyond any doubt contribute to the strengthening of international security. Here I will mention only the culmination of these efforts, namely: the agreement on the elimination of chemical weapons which was signed by more than 130 States last January in Paris.

Thus we may be pleased with the results achieved in recent years. But much still remains to be done and we must watch over the effective application of these agreements and measures. I would just like to quote a few examples. In spite of the international instruments we have, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction remains a major problem which the international community must continue to examine as a matter of priority. The year 1995 will be decisive for the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. We will also have to give even more attention to the question of conventional weapons. These questions among many others will have to be dealt with in a suitable framework.

Switzerland follows with great interest all international efforts in the area of confidence-building measures, arms control and disarmament. It participates wherever it can, for example, in the framework of CSCE, in the work being done and in the application of the measures approved. To date, Switzerland has ratified all the global agreements negotiated within the framework of the Conference on Disarmament and the institutions which preceded it. It also plans to ratify very shortly, subject to the necessary parliamentary approval, the latest convention - the one on chemical weapons - which it signed in Paris. It also intends to contribute to the establishment of the new chemical weapons organization in The Hague, to which it plans to offer, as far as possible, the services of its renowned nuclear and chemical laboratory in Spiez and an advanced chemical industry and it also intends to train some 60 inspectors for the organization (OPCW). Switzerland also participates actively in all international efforts to counter the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and will not fail to join in addition in the exchanges of information for the establishment of the Register of Conventional Arms.

It is along these lines that my delegation could follow the draft decision presented by the delegation of the United States on 22 March concerning "transparency in armaments". And since today we are going to receive the report of the Group of Scientific Experts, I wish to point out that Switzerland actively supports the efforts being made by this group and is in favour of an expansion of the activities of this very group.

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On the basis of the excellent report from the Secretary-General of the United Nations concerning "New dimensions of arms regulation and disarmament in the post-cold-war period", I would like to raise one point which my Government considers to be particularly important: in order to fulfil our tasks to the satisfaction of the greatest number of States, that is, in order to aspire to universal acceptability of the measures taken, in order to achieve this, we must have appropriate machinery. In this respect we are bound to note that the Conference on Disarmament, by its composition, is no longer the framework which is the best suited to present-day realities. We think that it should be open to all States that wish to join it and have concretely manifested their interest and commitment. The Conference on Disarmament, the only body which negotiates agreements of global scope, is a valuable institution, which in the general interest must be able to continue its work under the best possible conditions. But its limited membership somehow weakens its global vocation or, in other words, its global legitimation. Therefore, in the view of my authorities, this membership should in the sense already formulated be as broad as possible. The arguments put forward against this idea have, in our opinion, lost their relevance. This Conference of 40 members only has hardly been working any faster than other bigger organizations. Let us remember that it took 15 years following the conclusion of the ENMOD agreement to achieve any new results. What is ultimately decisive is indeed the political will to achieve something, whatever the size of the forum in which it is called upon to operate. Furthermore, we are sceptical about the argument concerning regional balances: the principle of consensus prevailing in the Conference on Disarmament makes it less necessary, without counting the present lack of focus, the need to redefine the regions and the growing importance of functional groupings.

To return to the notion of the legitimation of our body, which I have just used, I would like to recall, that it would not be the first time that we discussed this problem. Thus there were, for example in the history of our institution, that is, at the time of the institutions which preceded the Conference on Disarmament, times when member States adopted the policy of the empty chair or did not support the results produced by the Conference, because they had doubts about the legitimation of this body. The consequence of this was, as we all know, a first step towards the democratization of our institution. It is the conviction of my authorities, that it is now time to take a second step in this direction.

In conclusion I would like to assure you that my Government remains prepared to associate itself, actively and constructively, with international efforts to strengthen and advance international security. But at the same time it hopes that its request for full and complete participation in the Geneva Conference on Disarmament, which was made some years ago, will be taken into consideration during this session of the Conference on Disarmament. The commitment manifested thus far by Switzerland bears witness to its will to fulfil the obligations and responsibilities which would arise from the status of a full member. Finally, the already close relations between the host State and the Conference on Disarmament would be even further strengthened in this way.

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The PRESIDENT: I wish to thank Ambassador von Arx of Switzerland for his statement and for the kind words he expressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of Greece, Ambassador Ghikas.

Mr. GHIKAS (Greece): Mr. President, since this is the first time I am taking the floor in this Conference, I wish to extend to you my congratulations on the assumption of your functions. This is a critical juncture for the Conference, when considerable skill and in-depth knowledge of disarmament issues are fully required and there could be no more propitious coincidence than your term of office. You can count on our determination to cooperate with you and support you in your endeavours for a felicitous solution of the most urgent disarmament issues. Let me also take this opportunity to convey through you my warm thanks to your predecessors, Ambassadors Deyanov of Bulgaria, Amorim of Brazil and Servais of Belgium, as well as to the Secretary-General of the Conference, Ambassador Berasategui.

With the chemical weapons Convention behind, the Conference is now entering a new phase: a paradoxical situation reflecting both the assertiveness for the recent, much sought-after, success and the uncertainty for the new, formidable challenges facing us. Challenges arising from the considerable number of problems to be tackled. Indeed, what has been done for a given category of weapons remains to be done for every other category. Peace is global and indivisible. So must be the prohibition of the use of every kind of weapons. Challenges arising from the new international relations pattern, requiring new strategies, based on quite different approaches than the ones used so far, and new methods of proceeding as well.

That is why our agenda matters so much. Chemical weapons are but part of the problem. As long as arms regulation does not cover, in an equal manner, nuclear, biological and conventional weapons, all hard-won credibility risks being lost. Some steps in the right direction have already been taken. An Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban has been re-established. That could lead, in due course, to a treaty for a comprehensive nuclear test ban. Besides the present moratoria on nuclear tests by the United States of America, the Russian Federation and France are positive contributions to that end. Nevertheless, the non-proliferation Treaty has to be adhered to worldwide. We urge all countries which formed part of the former Soviet Union and possess nuclear weapons to do so as soon as possible. And we hope that the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea will reconsider accordingly its recent decision in this respect. The bold measures provided for by the chemical weapons Convention have been stated on several occasions. I would have thought that, however bold, those measures are by no means original. Anyone having dealt with arms control issues at the regional level, notably at the European level, would be familiar with all notions contained in the said Convention, including the famous "challenge inspections" that is to say the cornerstone of the Treaty on conventional forces in Europe, inasmuch as it describes in so many details locations to be inspected and inspection modalities. Which proves in turn, the extreme usefulness of

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regional arrangements both as a complement and as a pattern for global agreements.

As I said earlier, peace and security are global issues covering soldiers and weapons including technology related thereto. As far as the latter are concerned the global element is to be considered at the production and at the transfer level. Both should be limited to the point where essential security measures are met, of either the producer or the purchaser, but not beyond. Therefore ample and precise information is required, which is to be verifiable. Wherever that verification leads to negative conclusions, further action should be envisaged. This is an elementary scheme for transparency as we conceive it. Some very helpful ideas in this connection have been aired by Ambassadors Wagenmakers and Swift, to which my country can fully subscribe. In fact, the transparency issue is all the more important for my country as we witness next door to us, let alone a little farther away, a formidable proliferation of all kinds of weapons, not least conventional ones. Faced for half a century with an apparent immobility, Europe is now the focal point of a turmoil that has shattered several countries, threatened as many others, and whose tremendous consequences are there to stay. Our close proximity to the region under fire explains our concern and our willingness to be involved in a peaceful procedure of the settlement of the conflict, to put an end to present bloodshed and distress and set the foundations for a lasting solution. Transparency, when properly applied, is the most appropriate confidence-building measure. But once again, one should not discriminate by taking out what he does not like, for that would be a virtual distortion of the matter.

The fact that my country attaches such an importance to disarmament issues combined with its particular geographical position accounts for our firm determination to join this Conference as a full member. Not only has Greece been following closely the works of the Conference from its very inception, it is also party to all agreements or arrangements dealing with disarmament. Now, we have been told that an expansion of membership is regarded with scepticism. The composition question is being raised - as though we were talking about the ingredients for a good cake recipe - as is the fact that the consensus principle, which of course should and shall govern the talks, would be endangered. To our minds, the experience of the chemical weapons Convention suggests otherwise. The fact that those talks were confined to only 39 countries has not solved the consensus problem. If I have it correctly, the Conference final report was sent to New York with an endless row of national declarations - if that can be called a consensus - and all of it was created by insiders rather than outsiders, which however participated actively in the works. Still, it was precisely those outsiders that were subsequently invited to sign what others had negotiated for them. Do you consider this to be a just and right solution? And is that the same solution we are seeking to apply to all further negotiations? Needless to remind you that in 1978 it was agreed that the membership issue would be considered ever since, "at regular intervals". I am afraid I have to report that there has been so far no interval whatsoever, be it regular or irregular. This is the first time the issue is being considered. Let us hope that the

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Conference will be able to find an appropriate solution. I am confident that our two coordinators, Ambassadors Marín Bosch and O'Sullivan will carry out their mandate in the best possible way.

The PRESIDENT: I thank Ambassador Ghikas of Greece for his statement and for the kind words he expressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of Cuba, Mrs. Bauta Solés.

Mrs. BAUTA SOLES (Cuba) (translated from Spanish): Mr. President, allow me to congratulate you on discharging your functions as President of the Conference on Disarmament. You may count on the cooperation of our delegation. We also wish to express gratitude for Mr. Deyanov of Bulgaria's efficient performance as your predecessor.

Before starting my statement, I wish to take this opportunity to endorse expressly, one by one, detail by detail, the views put forward at the beginning of his statement by the distinguished Ambassador of Mexico, Mr. Miguel Marín Bosch, concerning initiatives associated with the topic of transparency in armaments, and with regard to which many delegations actually, almost 50 per cent of the membership of this Conference, expressed profound reservations about their content in the course of the work of the Ad Hoc Committee. I associate myself fully with the procedural proposal made by Ambassador Marín Bosch. That proposal by Mexico, and now by Mexico and Cuba deserves to be taken into account by you, as our rules of procedure stipulate.

As has been emphasized several times, the subject of transparency in armaments has been described as important by almost all delegations present here at one time or another. Our delegation also considers it important. However, to say that the item is important does not imply - still less is it tantamount to saying - that it constitutes a priority among the objectives presented to this Conference. Unfortunately we do not see the same willingness to take up other items, and for that reason it might be useful to dwell on this topic, if only for a moment. In so doing the first thing that strikes one is that the underlying arguments, between one case and another, are not necessarily the same. Some people feel the topic of transparency, and more particularly that of the register of information on conventional weapons, is important because it is a confidence-building measure, because it is a topic that is "ripe" for negotiation and because it is of regional importance. For others, who consider that confidence-building measures are not an end in themselves, that participation in the Register of Conventional Arms is a voluntary matter, that the basic mandate of this Conference is to negotiate and conclude disarmament agreements, especially in the nuclear sphere, the item is important, not because of its own inherent content, nor because of the contribution it will make to international - including of course regional - peace and security, but precisely because its relevance should not be over-inflated and take up most of the substantive endeavours of this body.

It is clear then that although we all may agree that this a matter of importance, the reasons that prompt us to say so may be as different as day and

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night or what is superficial from what is profound. That is why it may be a necessary condition for our work to recognize the general understanding on the importance of the item, but not a sufficient condition so that in this regard we should take for granted that there is a binding unanimity of views which might prove misleading when it comes to interpreting what are the truly priority tasks for this Conference. We hope that other areas in our sights will soon have prospects for progress as good as those enjoyed today by the item on transparency in armaments.

In analysing the relevance of the item on transparency, we do so taking into account all the elements of the General Assembly resolutions (resolution 46/36L, including paragraph 11 (b), and resolution 47/52). We hope that the Conference, when it concludes its work this year, and makes reference to the results of the work of the Ad Hoc Committee - whose Chairman, Ambassador M. Zahran of Egypt, we congratulate - will be in a position to forward to the General Assembly considerations on all the aspects of the topic, including the expansion of the Register of Conventional Arms.

We wish to place on record our satisfaction at the fact that the mandate of the Committee is that provided for in the resolution in question. Although we regret the unnecessary upsets that delayed the establishment of this body this year. We are pleased to see the prospects opened up to us by the agreed programme of work regarding the elaboration of definitions of terms that need to be elucidated such as those of: excessive and destabilizing accumulation of arms, military holdings and procurement through national production and practical measures to increase openness and transparency in these fields. The appointment of a Friend of the Chair on this item of the programme of work, together with the second entitled review of the problem and elaboration of practical measures to increase openness and transparency according to legal instruments in force related to the transfer of high technology with military applications and that of weapons of mass destruction, could be an initiative which will help the Committee to be successful in its work.

A great deal of emphasis has been placed on the importance for regions of the initiative in the field of transparency in armaments, but at least to our mind, it is clear that it is not enough to resolve the problems in these areas - it is necessary to draw up a set of political, economic, social and military measures, and to have the political will of all parties that have any part to play in the region in order to arrive at mutually acceptable solutions. An effective step in this direction would be for the main countries that supply arms to adopt effective measures of self-determination, including those of bringing about considerable reductions in their programmes for weapons research, development, improvement and production and their export as a step towards the creation of conditions favourable for resolving regional conflicts by peaceful means. The criterion of defensive sufficiency is relevant to reflection since it would not seem logical or right that the arms-producing countries should maintain an advantageous position in the military sphere vis-à-vis those who are obliged to import weaponry essential to ensure their self-defence, still less that they

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should use that profit by various means to try and impose their military and political interests.

The question of openness and transparency related to the transfer of high technology with military applications is a matter that we shall analyse in detail in the Ad Hoc Committee and which we shall deal with fully at that time. Suffice it to say today, that as a matter of principle, we favour the idea that any agreement on this topic should be reached through multilateral negotiations that are as universal as possible, because this will help to avoid discriminatory features in the final outcome that adversely affect the rightful interests of countries that do not have specific types of technology, whose dual use is crucial to the social and economic development of some nations. Unilateral controls are not the way to achieve transparency related to the transfer of high technology.

The question of openness and transparency related to weapons of mass destruction, we consider, is a matter on which this Conference must be in a position to make practical recommendations at the end of this session. It would also be useful for the legislation in force to be studied by its members so that measures can be adopted to enable accession to it by States which for the time being are not parties to it.

In document CD/TIA/WP.1, submitted by Cuba last year, paragraph 8 contains a proposal that the information supplied to the United Nations Register on Conventional Arms should immediately be made available to all the other participating States, for example through a permanently accessible database. The same paragraph suggests that the United Nations as a whole, and according to the mandate applicable to it, could issue periodical publications containing the information supplied by States. In paragraph 9 of the same document, in the part relating to regional participation in the Register, it is suggested that States could help in the process of dissemination by publishing full information on their legislation and administrative procedures with regard to arms transfers and supplying this information not only to the United Nations but also to interested States. These suggestions from my country, made as early as 21 July 1992, presupposed a positive response to participation by Cuba in the exchange of information in the Register on Conventional Arms, and I can confirm this on this occasion.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Cuba for her statement and for the kind words she expressed to me. Before I invite Dr. Dahlman to take the floor, I should like to ask whether any delegation wishes to take the floor now on matters other than the progress report of the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts. I take it the answer is no, and therefore I now give the floor to the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts, Dr. Ola Dahlman, to introduce the Group's progress report on its thirty-fifth session.

Mr. DAHLMAN (Sweden): I am pleased to report today on the recent session by the Ad Hoc Group held from 15 to 26 February 1993 and to introduce the Group's

(Mrs. Bauta Solés, Cuba)

progress report contained in CD/1185. The session was attended by experts and representatives from 27 countries. Upon invitation by the Conference on Disarmament, a representative of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) attended the session. He reviewed, from a technical perspective, IAEA activities with special emphasis on monitoring the non-proliferation Treaty. It might in this connection be appropriate to point out the differences between the principles guiding the IAEA monitoring and those underlying the work of the Ad Hoc Group. IAEA is in its monitoring of the NPT collecting data primarily on the flow of nuclear material through declared facilities. Based on these data IAEA makes its own analysis and draws its own conclusions which are then reported to the member States. The basic data are however not made available but kept within IAEA.

The basic principle of the international verification system considered by the Ad Hoc Group is that of a service organization for participating States. It should provide free and easy access to all data obtained from a global network of recording stations. It should further provide routine compilation of data and analysis results obtained at the International Data Centre using standardized procedures. Conclusions, e.g. as to the nature of observed events, should, however, be drawn by individual States and not by the International Data Centre. It further became evident that the data volume within the IAEA monitoring system is only a small fraction of that anticipated in the seismological system or that exchanged in the Group's latest large-scale test.

At its session the Group concluded its work on the second large-scale technical test (GSETT-2) by finalizing a report on the seismological evaluation. A summary of this report is annexed to the progress report and the full report was adopted as a conference room paper of the Group and is thus available to the CD. The Group expressed its appreciation to Professor Harjes of Germany, who coordinated this evaluation and drafted the report.

Many of the issues brought up in the evaluation report have been touched upon by the Group at earlier occasions and have also been reported to the Conference on Disarmament. I will however make a few observations and highlight some of the conclusions. Seismological array stations, where a number of sensors are placed in a specific pattern to form a receiving antenna, proved to be most valuable and contributed 75 per cent of all the observations made during GSETT-2. Thus, as the progress report states, the global network of stations should include arrays to the greatest degree practicable. It was documented that the background disturbances, which limit the detection capability, varied by a factor as large as 10 between participating stations. This stresses the importance of taking great care when siting monitoring stations. I have on earlier occasions reported on the uneven station distribution on the globe and its consequences. The evaluation showed that the detection capability during GSETT-2 corresponds to magnitude 2.5 in the northern part of Europe to be compared with magnitude 5 in large areas of the southern hemisphere. As magnitudes are logarithmic values this means that the detection capability is 300 times higher in northern Europe compared to most parts in the southern hemisphere. Also the accuracy by which an event could be located is influenced in a similar way. Location errors of about

(Mr. Dahlman, Sweden)

10 km in northern Europe should be compared to uncertainties exceeding 100 km or more observed in the southern hemisphere. If we want to achieve a verification system with high capability to observe events in all parts of the globe it is important to establish stations in areas which today are lacking high-performance equipment.

The Group noted that future monitoring environments and specific monitoring requirements will be set by participating States and may change over time. It is therefore impossible to establish a priori detailed requirements for the system. The Group however agreed that it would be necessary to conduct a cost-performance analysis of global seismic verification systems of different configurations. In a national contribution presented to the Group a first attempt was made to use computer modelling to identify optimal network configurations for given numbers of stations, either arrays or single stations. Additional such modelling will be needed, together with experimental data such as those obtained during GSETT-2, to establish a realistic cost-performance analysis for systems of different configurations and thus facilitate the efforts to achieve a cost-effective system.

The focus of the Group's efforts during the session was in-depth discussions on the reassessment of the existing concept of a global system as presented in the Group's fifth report (CD/903). The revised modernized system can, in a way similar to the one tested during GSETT-2, be divided into three components: a global network of stations, national data centres and an international data centre.

The global network of stations is to be composed of three parts. The Group refers to it as a three-tiered network. The first tier - the alpha network - provides event detection. It would tentatively consist of a global network of 40-60 high-performance array and single stations that would transmit continuous waveform data to the International Data Centre. The number of stations in the alpha network, their individual capabilities and their distribution thus determine the overall detection capability of the system. The second tier, the beta network, would provide data primarily for estimation of locations and depths of the events detected by the alpha network. The number of beta stations could be substantially larger than the number of alpha stations. The beta stations will make waveform data immediately available to the International Data Centre upon request as needed. The third tier, the gamma network, would comprise national and regional networks as available. These networks have been established primarily for the surveillance of national and regional seismicity. Data from the gamma network will be requested on a case-by-case basis to facilitate the analysis of events for which further data is considered useful.

The second component of the international system is the national data centres. Such a centre will be the gateway from a participating State to the International Data Centre and to other national centres, through which data and information will be exchanged. An International Data Centre (IDC) will be the third component of the system. The Group now considers that one such centre

(Mr. Dahlman, Sweden)

would be sufficient. The Group appreciates the offer by the United States delegation to provide a prototype IDC in Washington, D.C. for use in cooperative development and demonstration of the single IDC concept. The functions of the IDC will in principle be unchanged. The IDC is however supposed to work on a tighter time-scale and to produce a preliminary bulletin within a few hours of the occurrence of an event. The IDC will also base its work almost entirely on waveform data obtained automatically from the alpha and on request from the beta network.

High-speed communications are an essential element of the global system. In contrast to the situation which existed only a few years ago, high-capability global communications are now widely available and can be implemented as needed.

The Group considered a tentative time schedule for its future work, with the aim of beginning global testing of the new proposed concept by 1 January 1995. The Group is in its work critically dependent on a number of activities that take place between its sessions both in individual countries and as cooperative efforts among countries. The Group noted with appreciation the convening of an informal technical workshop in Canada from 17 to 22 November 1992. The results of that workshop greatly facilitated the Group's work during this session.

Education and training is of fundamental importance in establishing seismological facilities in new areas. The Group expresses its support to the efforts by Egypt to provide basic seismological training and information on the work of the GSE to scientists in African and Arab countries. The Group also expresses its support to those countries which assisted Egypt in this important work.

Mr. Michael Cassandra, who has for 10 years been serving as the Group's Secretary, has now left to meet new challenges. On behalf of the Group I would like to express to Mr. Cassandra our sincere thanks for his most valuable contribution to the work of the Group. Mr. Cassandra is succeeded by Ms. Jenifer Mackby and I very much welcome Ms. Mackby as our new Secretary. I would also like to express the Group's appreciation for the services provided by the secretariat throughout the session.

The Ad Hoc Group suggests that its next session, subject to approval by the Conference on Disarmament, should be convened from 26 July to 6 August 1993 in Geneva.

The PRESIDENT: I wish to thank the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts, Dr. Dahlman, for introducing the progress report in document CD/1185. Does any member wish at this stage to address the progress report or comment on the work of the Ad Hoc Group? I give the floor to the representative of the United States of America, Ambassador Ledogar.

Mr. LEDOGAR (United States of America): The United States welcomes the remarks by Dr. Dahlman on the progress being made by the Ad Hoc Group of

(Mr. Dahlman, Sweden)

Scientific Experts and we thank him for presenting this information to the Conference. The United States remains committed to supporting the work of the GSE. To ensure that the system concepts are fully tested in a realistic environment, as Dr. Dahlman has pointed out, the United States has offered to provide a prototype International Data Centre in Washington, D.C., for use in the cooperative development and testing of a data exchange system. Furthermore, I would underline the point that Dr. Dahlman alluded to that if future tests of the GSE data exchange system are to be fully successful, a more uniform distribution of global stations should be used than in previous tests. The United States therefore hopes the Conference on Disarmament will encourage additional countries to cooperate and participate in the work of the GSE.

The PRESIDENT: I wish to thank Ambassador Ledogar of the United States for his statement. Are there any other delegations who wish to take the floor to comment on Dr. Dahlman's report? If not, I should like to inform you that, in accordance with the practice of the Conference, we shall consider the recommendation contained in the progress report, concerning the dates for the next session of the Ad Hoc Group, at the opening of the second part of the annual session of the Conference.

I announced at the opening of this plenary meeting that, in light of the exchange of views held yesterday at the Presidential consultations, I had in mind convening an informal open-ended consultation to consider the proposal advanced on 4 March by Ambassador Ledogar of the United States. The representatives of Mexico and Cuba have indicated that they do not favour further discussion on that initiative. May I clarify that I advanced the idea of an informal consultation in view of some recent indications that the text previously circulated could be the subject of negotiations to make it acceptable to all? - and it is my hope that this clarification satisfies the point raised by the representatives of Mexico and Cuba. As President, it is my duty to explore every proposal put before us and it is in that sense that I proposed an exchange of views today on the text before us, keeping in mind the fact that the text before us can be the subject of further compromise. Accordingly, as I announced at the outset of the meeting, I intend now to
suspend the plenary meeting and convene an informal open-ended consultation with the participation of non-members to consider the proposal before the Conference on the United Nations Register on Conventional Arms.

The meeting was suspended at 11.25 a.m. and resumed at 12.05 p.m.

The PRESIDENT: The 648th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament is resumed.

Does any delegation wish to take the floor? I give the floor to the United States of America, Ambassador Ledogar.

Mr. LEDOGAR (United States of America): The United States believes that the Conference on Disarmament got off to an excellent start in January. This body

(The President)

decided to focus its work in four areas and established ad hoc committees within the first week of the session. The CD also successfully completed two reports in preparation of the United Nations First Committee resumed session. One report in particular, in our view, the CD's comments on the United Nations Secretary-General's "New dimensions" Report, is quite forward-leaning in its positive outlook on the future of arms control and disarmament in the post-cold-war era. All of this reflects, in my eyes, potential for progress, a new spirit, a new outlook, and a bright future for this body ... so what happened with the draft decision on the United Nations Register?

The United States is disappointed but not surprised that we are unable to take what we would have thought was a simple decision endorsing the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. Three weeks ago, on 4 March, I proposed in plenary that the CD, as a corporate body, and a body that is autonomous from the United Nations, take action related to ensuring the success of the Register. It is true that there have been two consecutive United Nations resolution, in 1991 and 1992, dealing with the Register. But in my proposal, I was suggesting that the CD find some way to complement what has been done already in the United Nations.

Others are doing the same on a regional basis. There have been conferences in Buenos Aires, Warsaw, Tokyo, and next week, a conference in Florence. A decision also was adopted in Vienna at the CSCE's Forum for Security Cooperation several weeks ago supporting the United Nations Register. Moreover, TIA is on the CD's agenda. This is the first item the CD has added to its agenda in almost 10 years. The CD has been requested to examine questions related to military holdings, procurement, technology transfers, etc. These issues cannot be separated from the overall rubric of transparency in armaments and the United Nations Register. Therefore, wouldn't it have been only natural for the CD to take action similar to that which is being done by others regarding the Register?

I regret that one or two delegations have decided to block this modest proposal using the technique of a pocket veto. More troubling, however, is the apparent indication that some countries represented at this table are truly against and obviously afraid of transparency, openness, and measures that build confidence, both regionally and globally.

The future of the CD is in our hands. This body can become more active, and more relevant, or it can atrophy. If the former is to be our future, we certainly need to become more action-oriented. The draft CD decision proposed by the United States was an example of something that was action-oriented. The draft decision would not have obligated anyone. It simply stated the obvious by encouraging participation by CD members and CD non-member participants. The Register after all will only be successful if participation is great. In addition, the United States proposed that we exchange national submissions to the Register among ourselves here in Geneva. Those data would have already been public in New York.

(The President)

My delegation therefore is saddened at this turn of events. Is this the same body which looks to negotiate a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty? Is this the same body that wants to achieve some progress in negative security assurances or outer space arms control? In Washington and elsewhere, people will draw their own conclusions about the utility of the CD when worthwhile goals like the United Nations Register, a measure which, as has been pointed out, was approved without a single negative vote by the United Nations, and one which seeks to build confidence and openness among States worldwide, cannot be endorsed by the CD.

Mr. MARIN BOSCH (Mexico) (translated from Spanish): What we had to say, about the Register on Conventional Arms established at the Headquarters in New York of the United Nations, we said at the beginning of this plenary meeting, in the statement we made this morning. My delegation reserves the right to return to this matter in plenary when it sees how, if this is the way it happens, the description of this matter is going to appear in the report that we will submit to the General Assembly in the autumn.

The PRESIDENT: I thank Ambassador Marín Bosch for his statement. Does any other delegation wish to take the floor? It appears not.

The secretariat has distributed today the weekly timetable of meetings to be held by the Conference and its subsidiary bodies during the week beginning 17 May. You will recall that, at the 646th plenary meeting, we confirmed that there would be no meetings of the Conference and its subsidiary bodies during the first week of the second part of the session, between 10 and 14 May, due to the meeting in New York during that period of the Preparatory Committee of the review conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. We also agreed to re-schedule the plenary meeting to be held the following week for Tuesday 18 May. It goes without saying that the timetable is merely indicative and subject to change, if necessary. On this understanding I presume we may adopt it.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: That concludes our work for today, and I now intend to adjourn this plenary meeting. The next plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament will be held on Tuesday 18 May, at 10 a.m.

The meeting rose at 12.15 p.m.